

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 SY-05 HA-05 OPR-02

AID-05 CA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 ICAE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-12 PC-01 EB-08

COME-00 TRSE-00 /123 W

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O 041335Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 165

AMEMBASSY PARIS NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5738

PARIS PLEASE PASS UNDERSECRETARY NEWSOM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CG, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S VISIT TO LUBUMBASHI

REF: KINSHASA 5688

1. I SPENT THE DAY JUNE 3 IN LUBUMBASHI WHERE I DISCUSSED CURRENT SITUATION WITH AMERICAN COMMUNITY (BUSINESS, MISSIONAIRES, PEACE CORPS), AND CALLED ON SHABA'S MILITARY GOVERNOR, GENERAL SINGA.

2. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT EXPATRIATES IN LUBUMBASHI, AMERICANS INCLUDED, ARE EXTREMELY ANXIOUS CONCERNING SECURITY. MY ITALIAN AND BELGIAN COLLEAGUES CAME AWAY WITH THE SAME IMPRESSION FOLLOWING THEIR VISITS TO LUBUMBASHI EARLIER IN THE WEEK. REPLACING REGIONAL COMMISSIONER WITH MILITARY GOVERNOR, IMPOSITION OF DUSK-TO-DAWN CURFEW AND PERVASIVE PRESENCE OF MILITARY THROUGHOUT CITY ALL CONTRIBUTE TO SIEGE PSYCHOLOGY AMONG POPULACE.

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3. ALTHOUGH EVIDENCE IS LACKING, ALL EXPATRIATES SEEM TO FEAR THE PRESENCE OF KATANGAN REBELS IN THE ENVIRONS OF LUBUMBASHI AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF THEIR ATTACKING THE CITY AS SOON AS THE EUROPEAN TROOPS WITHDRAW. WHILE THEY SEEM SOMEWHAT REASSURED BY THE PROSPECT OF A FORCE COMPOSED OF MOROCCANS AND SOME OTHER AFRICANS FILLING THE VOID WHEN THE FRENCH AND BELGIAN

TROOPS PULL OUT, THERE SEEM TO BE DIVIDED OPINIONS AS TO WHETHER SUCH A FORCE WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO INDUCE THE EXPATRIATES TO STAY ON. CERTAINLY THEY WILL LOOK TO THE FORCE TO PROTECT THEM NOT ONLY FROM REBEL ATTACK BUT JUST AS MUCH FROM EXCESSES OF ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT TROOPS WHO ARE VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE AND WHOSE INDISCIPLINE CONTINUES TO BE THE SOURCE OF NUMEROUS INCIDENTS AMONG BOTH THE ZAIRIAN AND EXPATRIATE POPULATIONS.

4. WHILE THERE IS A DISCREET BUT STEADY FLOW OF EXPATRIATE DEPENDENTS OUT OF SHABA, NO MASS EXODUS HAS YET OCCURRED. OBVIOUSLY IT WOULDN'T TAKE MUCH TO START ONE, AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE MOROCCAN S

ET AL REPLACE THE BELGIAN AND FRENCH FORCES (I.E., AS GRADUALLY AS POSSIBLE, IN SUFFICIENTLY LARGE NUMBERS, AND POSITIONED IN URBAN AREAS WHERE EUROPEANS ARE CONCENTRATED) WILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT EFFECT ON EXPATRIATE ATTITUDES. IN THIS RESPECT, IF FRENCH INSIST ON PULLING OUT QUICKLY, THE RETENTION OF SOME BELGIAN FORCES FOR LONGER PERIOD - PERHAPS IN FORM OF AIR-MOBILE QUICK-REACTION FORCE STATIONED AT KAMINA AS SUGGESTED REFTEL - WOULD HELP. EXPATRIATE ANXIETIES WILL OF COURSE ALSO BE ALLAYED IF NO REBEL THREAT TO LUBUMBASHI MATERIALIZES AS TIME PASSES.

5. AS FOR THE AMERICANS, WHILE NOT FORMALLY MOVING INTO ANY OPERATIONAL PLAN OF EVACUATION, THE CONSULATE NEVERTHELESS IS TAKING A NUMBER OF PRECAUTIONARY STEPS TO BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO COPE WITH AN EMERGENCY SHOULD IT ARISE. I BELIEVE THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL

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A CORRECT COURSE OF ACTION GIVEN THE MANY CURRENT UNCERTAINTIES. THE CONSULATE'S HANDLING OF THE SITUATION TO DATE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE AND WIDELY APPRECIATED AMONG AMERICANS IN THE REGION.

6. DURING MY TALK WITH GENERAL SINGA I TOOK THE OCCASION TO ASK THAT ALL POSSIBLE PROTECTION BE EXTENDED TO THE FACILITIES IN KOLWEZI OF CIS, THE US FIRM CONSTRUCTING THE INGA-SHABA POWER LINE. I NOTED THE EMBASSY'S APPEAL TO FAZ COMMANDER GENERAL BABIA IN KINSHASA EARLIER IN THE WEEK, AS WELL AS CONSULATE LUBUMBASHI'S LETTER TO GENERAL SINGA JUNE 2, BOTH OF WHICH EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS OF PILLAGING AND VANDALISM OF CIS PROPERTY AND ASKED FOR PROTECTION. SINGA SAID HE HAD THAT MORNING (JUNE 3) SENT ORDERS TO KOLWEZI COMMANDER GENERAL DIKUTA TO INSPECT CIS FACILITIES AND TAKE STEPS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SECURITY AT CIS SITE.

7. I ALSO RAISED WITH SINGA MATTER OF HUMANITARIAN AID. HE SEEMED QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF RED CROSS ACTIVITIES AT KOLWEZI, INCLUDING THE SUPPLY OF EMERGENCY FOOD AID, AND EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THIS RELIEF PROGRAM WAS PROCEEDING WELL. CONSULATE LUBUMBASHI WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR PROGRAM CLOSELY WITH VIEW TO ASSESSING ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND IDENTIFYING AREAS WHERE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

MAY BE REQUIRED.

8. REFLECTING MOBUTU'S CURRENT LINE THAT THINGS WERE RETURNING TO NORMAL, SINGA CLAIMED KOLWEZI MINING FACILITIES WERE GETTING GOING AGAIN THANKS TO GECAMINES ZAIRIAN TECHNICIANS WHO, UNLIKE THEIR EUROPEAN CONTERPARTS, HAD NOT FLED. (IN OVER-FLYING KOLWEZI WE NOTICED ONE -- BUT ONLY ONE -- SMOKESTACK BACK IN OPERATION.) SINGA ALSO CLAIMED THAT SECURITY IN WESTERN SHABA WAS MUCH IMPROVED. HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO QUERY HE WAS VAGUE ABOUT WHO CONTROLS MUTSHATSHA, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE WERE STILL POCKETS OF REBELS CLOSE TO THE TOWN. HE DID NOT MENTION FAZ'S RETAKING MUTSHATSHA WITHOUT THE AID OF FOREIGN TROOPS, AS WAS ANNOUNCED BY GOZ LATER THE SAME DAY.

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9. FINALLY, SINGA SAID HE DID NOT SEE REASON FOR BELGIAN AND FRENCH TROOPS TO REMAIN IN SHABA ONCE AFRICAN FORCE WAS IN PLACE SUPPORTING FAZ. THIS STRUCK ME MORE AS PERSONAL VIEW THAN STATEMENT OF OFFICIAL POSITION. HOWEVER, IT DOES RAISE THE QUESTIONS OF BOTH THE GOZ'S SENSITIVITY TO CHARGES THAT FAZ IS HELPLESS, AND OF POSSIBLE GOZ RESENTMENT OF EUROPEANS' RELUCTANCE TO COMMIT THEIR TROOPS BEYOND MERELY PROTECTING THEIR NATIONALS. CUTLER

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